

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheet of drawings includes changes to Fig. 1. This sheet, which comprises only Fig. 1, replaces the original sheet comprising Fig. 1. In Figure 1, previously omitted reference number 27 has been added.

Attachment: 1 Replacement Sheet(s)
1 Annotated Sheet(s) Showing Changes

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Office Action objected to drawing Figure 1 due to the omission of reference number 27 and an unnumbered lead line in Fig. 1.

The unnumbered lead line in Fig. 1 does indeed point to element 27 and a replacement sheet with reference number 27 added is attached hereto along with an additional copy of Fig. 1 showing the proposed change in red ink.

The Office Action objected to the disclosure because of an error in paragraph 00013 concerning the identity of element 45. An amendment to the specification correcting this error is made herewith. Element 45 is the second end of shell 21.

The Office Action rejected claims 1 – 3 and 5 – 15 under §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,709,726 to Fitzgibbons.

In Applicant's invention, the metal, pressure-energized seals are an integral part of the seal retainer. The claims have been amended to make it clear that the pressure-energized seals are formed integrally with the metal seal retainer and are not separate, removable pieces like the metal seals described in Fitzgibbons.

In Fig. 4 of Fitzgibbons, it can be clearly seen from the cross-hatching pattern that seals 124, 126 and 132 are separate and distinct pieces from floating ring 102 – i.e., they are not integral with the floating ring (seal retainer). “As previously stated, each of the seals housed on the floating ring 102 are metallic, fluid-responsive, compressible seals.” [col. 5; lines 48-50 *emphasis supplied*] Moreover, Fitzgibbons notes that the metallic seals may be formed of a different material: “Such metallic seals are available in various noncorrosive, spring-like materials such as Inconel X-750.” [col. 5; lines 55-57]

Accordingly, it is submitted that claims 1 – 3, 5 – 8, and 11 – 15, as amended, are not anticipated by Fitzgibbons.

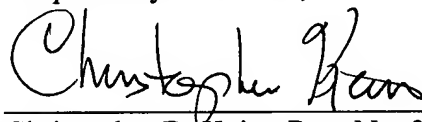
The Office Action rejected claims 4 and 16 under §103(a) as being unpatentable over Fitzgibbons. The Office Action contends that the leg of ring seal 124 (as shown in Fig. 4) extends past surface 104 and thus the lip seal is slightly displaced with the probe is inserted.

Applicant traverses this contention. Whether the leg of ring seal 124 is displaced when the probe is inserted depends entirely on the outside diameter of the probe. If the OD of the probe is less than or equal to the ID of seal 124, no displacement would occur. This is not an unlikely situation given that seal 124 is designed to expand radially upon the application of fluid pressure.

Fitzgibbons does not show the probe of male coupling half 12 inserted into female coupling half 14 and is silent on the radial dimensions of probe and seal 124. Accordingly, it is submitted that it would not lead one skilled in the art to the invention claimed in claims 4 and 16.

For the above-stated reasons, it is submitted that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the rejections is requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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Rebecca Ginn

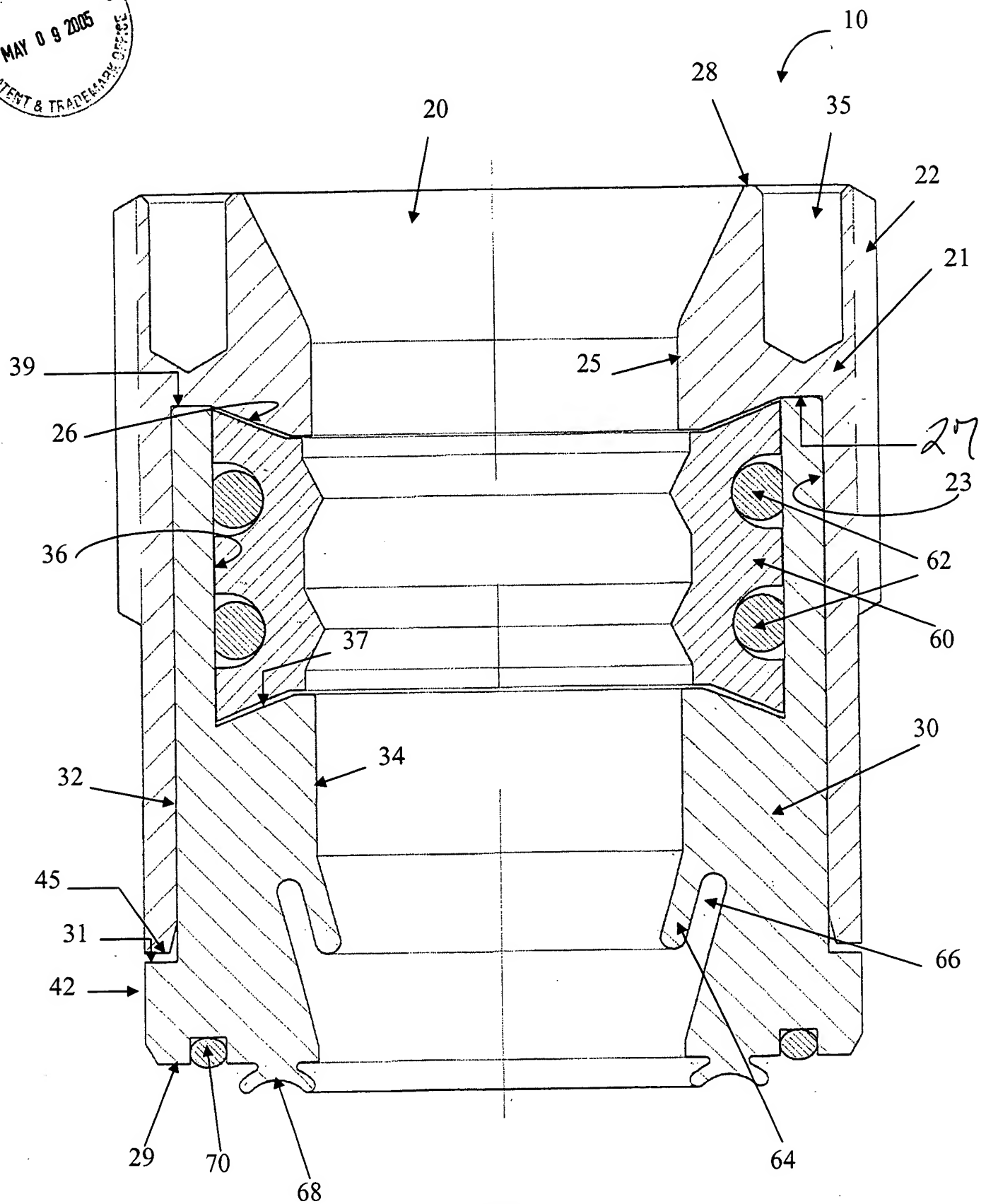


FIG. 1